

Claims

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1. A system for facilitating compliance with rules and procedures required for payment approval from a health care payer in connection with an encounter between a health care practitioner and a patient, comprising:

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a portable device for use at a point of patient care by the health care practitioner, the portable device comprising:

a) memory for storing information that facilitates the health care practitioner's compliance with the rules and procedures required for payment approval from the health care payer in connection with the encounter;

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b) an input mechanism for receiving input from a user at least during the encounter and at the point of care; and

c) an output mechanism for providing output to the user at least during the encounter and at the point of care.

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2. The system of claim 1 wherein the portable device comprises a processor, wherein the information stored in the memory includes instructions for execution by the processor, and wherein the information also includes data that represents the rules and procedures required for payment approval from at least one health care payer in connection with the encounter.

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3. The system of claim 2, wherein the portable device enables the user to communicate information to the device that specifies at least one diagnosis for the patient.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the portable device enables the user to communicate information to the device that specifies at least one health care directive for the patient.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the at least one health care directive for the patient includes at least one drug medication to be applied to the patient.

6. The system of claim 4, wherein the at least one health care directive for the patient includes at least one health care procedure to be applied to the patient.

7. The system of claim 4, wherein the device responds to the specified at least one health care directive by communicating information to the user that constitutes notice that the health care directive violates compliance with at least one rule or procedure required for payment approval by a health care payer in association with the encounter.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the user communicates information to the portable device that constitutes at least a request for the portable device to calculate a visit level classification based upon the at least one diagnosis and the at least one health care directive.

9. The system of claim 2, wherein the user input mechanism of the portable device includes a voice input mechanism that enables capture and storage of voice information regarding at least one issue associated with the encounter.

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10. The system of claim 9, wherein user communicates at least one portion of voice information to the device, and where the user communicates information that identifies at least one issue associated with the encounter, and where the user communicates information directing that the at least one portion of voice information be stored in

10 association with the at least one issue.

11. The system of claim 2, wherein the user communicates information to the device that constitutes at least a query for identifying remaining actions required for compliance with rules and procedures required for payment approval by a health care payer in

15 association with the encounter.

12. The system of claim 8, where in the device responds to the query by communicating at least one prompt to the user, the prompt communicating a directive for performing at least one action, and where the user responds to the at least one prompt by communicating information to the device representing or constituting the performance
5 the at least one action.

13. The system of claim 1, where in the system further comprising:
a central information facility comprising:

- 10 a) a computer connected to the portable device via a first communications channel, the computer receiving information generated by the portable device in connection with the encounter;
- b) a data store connected to the computer via a second communications channel, the data store receiving and storing information generated by the portable device in connection with the encounter.

14. A method for facilitating compliance with rules and procedures required for payment approval from a health care payer in connection with an encounter between a health care practitioner and a patient, comprising the steps of:

5 a) providing at least one portable device, the portable device for use at a point of patient care by the health care practitioner, the portable device comprising:

a memory for storing information that facilitates the health care practitioner's compliance with the rules and procedures required for payment approval from the health care payer in connection with the encounter

10 an input mechanism for receiving input from a user at least during the encounter and at the point of care; and

an output mechanism for providing output to the user at least during the encounter and at the point of care.

15 15. A method for facilitating compliance with rules and procedures required for payment approval from a health care payer in connection with an encounter between a health care practitioner and a patient, comprising:

a) receiving via a first communications channel, information generated by at least one portable device in connection with the encounter;

20 b) storing the information generated by at least one portable device in connection with the encounter.

16. A method for facilitating compliance with rules and procedures required for payment approval from a health care payer in connection with an encounter between a health care practitioner and a patient, comprising the steps of:

5 a) providing at least one portable device, the portable device for use at a point of patient care by the health care practitioner, the portable device comprising:

a memory for storing information that facilitates the health care practitioner's compliance with the rules and procedures required for payment approval from the health care payer in connection with the encounter

10 an input mechanism for receiving input from a user at least during the encounter and at the point of care; and

an output mechanism for providing output to the user at least during the encounter and at the point of care;

15 b) receiving via a first communications channel, information generated by the at least one portable device in connection with the encounter;

c) storing the information generated by the at least one portable device in connection with the encounter.